POSTCOMM Section Annual Report
2012-2013

POSTCOM section membership has continued to increase, and over the past year the section added 27 members to a total figure of 197, representing a percentage increase of 16 percent. This was one of the largest percentage increases among all sections in the ISA, and indicates that scholarly interest in the post-Communist realm remains not only relevant, but is in fact growing among academics. Since 2005 the section membership has effectively tripled, from 66 to 197. We have drawn new members not only from North America, but also from Europe, Russia and Central Asia, and our contacts with academic organizations in these regions are increasing.

We continue to work closely with the Association for the Study of Eastern European and Eurasian States (ASEEES)--POSTCOMM sponsored a panel at the ASEEES meeting in New Orleans in November 2012. We maintain close ties to our colleagues in the Russian International Studies Association (RISA) and the Central and Eastern European International Studies Association, and are developing stronger linkages to international studies organizations in Kazakhstan and Australia.

In 2012 POSTCOMM implemented the Robert H. Donaldson award. This award is given to the outstanding paper covering our region from the preceding ISA conference. The recipient of the Donaldson award is recognized at the annual section reception, and provided a plaque and cash award. The award is supported by contributions from the membership or others who wish to make a donation. We have a small amount of money already donated, but members should be encouraged to contribute additional funds. In addition, the Executive Committee approved the appointment of two Vice Presidents (Mariya Omelicheva and Houman Sadri), as well as the new post of Secretary (Dilshod Achilov).

Unfortunately, a health crisis forced me to resign as POSTCOMM President in January 2013, and much work remains for my successor, Mariya Omelicheva, and the Executive Committee. Several matters should be addressed as soon as possible. First, the section web site requires updating. I had made some progress on this task, but the work not only must be finished, but a regular web master should be appointed by the EC, as the site requires revision every few months. Secondly, the section should publish an electronic newsletter at least once, and preferably twice a year. One of the Vice Presidents may serve as the editor of this publication, or a separate position could be approved by the EC.
Almost all other sections have a regular newsletter, and such a vehicle affords regular contact with the membership, provides important information regarding the section and its activities, and attracts new members, as well as boosting morale of the membership. Thirdly, the section should recharter within the next year or two, submitting a new charter that reflects the changes made regarding the position of Secretary, as well as other modifications deemed necessary. Finally, financial support for the section should be pursued via donors, especially academic institutions and centers whose mission is to support education and research on the POSTCOMM region. The section typically needs $500-700 each year in addition to membership dues to pay for the meeting room and reception at the annual ISA convention, and this amount may be raised through the creation of affiliations with NRCs, leading academic departments and universities, and individual donors. Sponsors can be acknowledged in the section newsletter and on the web site, and information regarding their academic programs, conferences and related events may be included free of charge there as well. Publishing companies who produce books on the POSTCOMM region are also a potential source of sponsorship.

Respectfully submitted,

Reuel R. Hanks